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"Mouse dung!" Leafpool cried, exasperated.

There was no more dock leaves left in the herb supply. Over the past few sunrises, her and Jaypaw had been going through a ridiculous amount of dock due to Cloudtail, Dustpelt, Brackenfur and Thornclaw having many wounds to be treated because of a fight with a Shadowclan patrol over the border conflict, once again.

Besides, she had already been on edge for the past quarter-moon because of the whole Crowfeather incident. She thought that she would have already been able to get over him and that this wouldn't affect her anymore, yet it did. He had brainwashed her into almost abandoning her clan for good, and she knew where her loyalties lie. Just because she had made the choice to be there for her clan, Crowfeather was such an asshole to her! She couldn't get the incident out of her head when he called her a heartless bitch and then strutted away, tail held high, and then mated with Nightcloud as a rebound. But she knew that wasn't true, she knew that she was a good cat who had a true heart to the things that mattered to her most. She shook herself with disgust to get him and

his repulsive behaviour out of her mind. Stupid fucktoms!

She decided that the best thing to do right now to clear her mind was to go for a walk in the forest to collect some more dock leaves and get the chance to have some time to herself. It was always meditative to stroll alone in the forest.

"Jaypaw, I'm going in the forest to-"

Before she could even finish her sentence, Jaypaw jumped beside her, ready to come along.

"Don't. Even. Say. It. No, it's not because I think you'll slow me down. I'm stressed and want to walk in the forest alone to clear my head. You'll understand when you're my age". Leafpool snapped.

Jaypaw tilted his head suspiciously.

"Fine!" he huffed before stalking away to the Warrior's den to check on Dustpelt's wounds.

Shaking her head, she bounded out of the hollow and into the forest. She lifted her muzzle and sniffed the air, her senses filling with the rich smell of prey and dewy leaves and herbs from the Newleaf rain. She quickly identified the scent of the slightly bitter dock leaves, and followed the scent until she came close to the border with Windclan. There were abundant clumps of the herb where the open hilly landscape began. She began to fasten the roots in her jaws and pull plenty from the earth to restock her supply.

Just as she was pulling a third mouthful of the leaves, a rustling in a bush on the Thunderclan side of the border startled her. Her fur stood on end as she jumped, ears flattened and hissed warily.

"Who's there? Come out now!" she called.

She let her fur flatten again as she recognised the bright dappled golden pelt of her fellow medicine cat from Riverclan.

"Mothwing, hi! What are you doing on Thunderclan territory? You just about made me make dirt!" Leafpool exclaimed.

Mothwing sat herself down beside Leafpool, purring amusedly. "I can see that, I thought you were going to claw my ears off. I'm here because I had to come to Windclan to ask Barkface for some goldenrod herbs, it doesn't seem to be growing well in Riverclan territory lately".

"You could have asked *me* for some, you know!" Leafpool replied as she nudged her friend's flank playfully.

"I know, I know. But I don't want to stress out your pretty little head more than it already is, do I?" Mothwing teased.

Leafpool felt her ears turn hot as she looked down at the earth shyly. She had always found her good friend stunningly beautiful with her majestic golden dappled pelt and breath-taking amber eyes. How could Mothwing call her pretty when she was just this unfairly beautiful herself?

Leafpool laughed awkwardly. "Uh.. don't worry at all, I'm always happy to help you out with herbs! But how did you know that I was stressed?" she asked curiously.

Mothwing, purring again, inched closer to her, so that the two friend's pelts brushed lightly against each other.

"Leafpool, my amazing friend. Any cat with half a brain can see that you are radiating stress. Come on, tell me, what ever is the matter?" she meowed, half sarcastically and half concerned.

Leafpool sighed.

'Well, it's just the whole thing that happened between Crowfeather and I. I felt... or I thought I did at least... just so much love for him and that everything would just be a happier ever after. But when I finally realised that my first and foremost true destiny and heart lies with serving my clan, he was absolutely horrible about it. Denied ever loving me and just pretended that nothing ever happened. It was all just like a bad dream" she vented troubledly.

Mothwing studied her intently, understanding.

"That's shocking, Leafpool, how he treated you I mean. That's just

typical tomcats for you. I can understand your hurt that he could suddenly just act out like that as if nothing happened. But I think it's so strong of you to have realised where your heart truly lies and even more so to accept that it perhaps wasn't meant to be" she said soothingly.

"Thanks Mothwing, I appreciate it, I really do. The last impression he left is that he is such an asshole that was never worth it all along, and that nothing compares to how rewarding it is to be a medicine cat" Leafpool said, brightening up more this time.

Mothwing beamed happily.

"That's my girl!"

The two friends sat for several moments, side by side, watching the small stream between Thunderclan and Windclan territory flow by, taking in the pleasant aroma of the Newleaf air and enjoying the birdsong among the trees.

"You know..." Mothwing started. "You weren't just all flustered about that jerk".

Leafpool's ears pricked. "What do you mean?"

"There's something else. I see the way you look at me, Leafpool", she meowed in a low voice.

Leafpool fidgeted uncomfortably on her haunches.

"Mothwing, I... I'm not really sure what you're getting at" she stammered, clearly making an effort to avoid Mothwing's eyes.

"Look at me, darling" Mothwing said, her voice almost at a whisper. "Whenever we see each other, you stumble upon your words, you look at the ground like a lost kit, you have this look in your eyes when you look at me when you think I'm not looking. You think I've never noticed? You silly girl, Leafpool".

Leafpool was so flustered this time, so much so that she didn't even know what to say. She just looked down at her paws as her brain raced, and her heart stammering like the beat of a butterfly's wings.

Surely she couldn't really be this fond of Mothwing in the sort of way she felt for Crowfeather? She didn't know whether to feel more confused than she ever has or just embarrassed that her attraction towards Mothwing was so painfully obvious.

She finally gathered the courage to speak, even though she felt like there was a lump stuck in her throat.

"I... I think that you're incredibly beautiful, Mothwing. To the point that is beyond normal" she swallowed before continuing "But we're both she-cats, and even more importantly, medicine cats... so... this... just can't be right" she said quietly.

Mothwing shuffled to face Leafpool directly, so that their faces were just inches away.

"You're quiet beautiful yourself, Leafpool. And even more than that, I trust you with my life more than any cat. You race through my mind all day. We both might be she-cats, but who said that there is anything wrong with that?" she purred softly.

"But as I've just found... as medicine cats, we can just choose one or the other. Love or life as a medicine cat. According to the laws of Starclan, there can't be both" Leafpool sighed.

Mothwing suddenly perked up.

"Hey... wait a second. If Starclan says that a medicine can't have a mate or kits, they must only be referring to a tom cat and a she-cat. There was never anything mentioned about two she-cats, right?"

Leafpool couldn't supress a mrrow of laughter as she looked at her friend.

"Mothwing!" she exclaimed as she teasingly swatted across her head. "How could I have known that you would say something like that? But seriously, I really don't know about that one. All I know is that I... uhh... didn't think that I was into she-cats in that way?"

Mothwing ducked her head in an attempt to avoid the playful swat of her friend's paw across her head.

"Well, who said that you can't be into both tomcats and she-cats? Stop pretending like you don't, Leafpool" Mothwing said, before unexpectedly nudging the side of her flank into Leafpool's slighter build, sending her flying several fox-lengths away into a bush nearby.

Purring with uncontrollable laughter, she bounded over to Leafpool who was stuck in the bush, and fastened her jaws to the scruff of the smaller she-cats neck and heaved her out of the tangle of leaves and twigs.

"Hey, that wasn't funny!" Leafpool protested.

Mothwing just smirked and began to lick Leafpool's pelt gently, her tongue moving in rhythmic warm strokes, removing some of the leaves in her pale brown fur.

"Deep down, every cat is a little bit fishy, but if it's Leafpool, she is obviously uncontrollable like a pack of dogs that smelled blood" Mothwing teased.

Leafpool squirmed under Mothwing's weight, and with all her might, managed to heave her off of her, and holding around her neck with her front legs, tackled her in a roll. The two she-cats purred with delight, playfully rolling about on the mossy earth.

"Mothwing! It's almost twilight, we need to go back to our camps as soon as possible, every cat will be wondering about where we are!" Leafpool realised.

Mothwing's eyes briefly clouded with disappointment as she sat herself up once again, face to face to Leafpool.

"Oh, very well. Yes, I suppose you're right. I was supposed to bring back that goldenrod to the camp quiet some time ago, and Leopardstar wouldn't be pleased to find out I've been hanging about all day with a certain little miss-perfect- she-cat from Thunderclan" she winked.

Before going their separate ways, Leafpool pressed her muzzle against Mothwings, looking into her dreamy amber eyes for a

moment, then they both closed their eyes as they softly pressed their noses together.

"I love you, Mothwing" Leafpool whispered.

"I love you too, Leafpool. More than you can imagine" she whispered back with a gentle low voice.

Leafpool stared after her as she leaped over the stream, watching until she couldn't see the long, golden dappled pelt anymore. She began to make her way back to the Thunderclan camp, her jaws full with the dock leaves.

Later that evening as they finished up checking the medicine den supply and applying the dock leaf poultice to some of the warrior's wounds, her apprentice, Jaypaw padded up besides her.

'I always knew you liked she-cats!" the young cat blurted boldly.

"Jaypaw!" Leafpool hissed.

When will this little mouse dung stop being all up her business?

Not even Starclan can answer that, she sighed.